Springfield Township High School

**Graduation Project Annotated Bibliography**

**Student Name:**

**Annotation # 3**

**MLA Citation:**

Lesley, Lewis. "Value for Money in Urban Transport Public Expenditure: the Case of Light Rail." *Public Money & Management* 13.1 (1993): 27-33. *Business Source Premier*. EBSCO. Web. 24 Feb. 2011.

**INFORMATION:**

Author’s credentials:

Lewis Lesley is a professor at John Moore’s University, which is located in Liverpool, England. Lesley has written extensively on the topic of light rail and public transportation. Lesley’s works include papers that argue for investments in public transportation, specifically light rail and other intra-city means of transportation.

Scope and purpose of the work:

This paper’s purpose is to inform the reader of statistics and facts on British urban transport, which includes automobile, bus, and light rail. The paper is also meant to persuade the reader into seeing the benefits of light rail and bus systems over congested highways.

Intended Audience:

This paper is meant for people who are experts in the fields of urban planning and lay people looking to get a better understanding of British transportation information. While the paper does reference some technical subjects, Lesley does a good job at elaborating and explaining his ideas to all who might be reading his article.

**SUMMARY**

Thesis or main idea:

Cities in Britain, the rest of Europe and especially North America are struggling to accommodate rising levels of private car ownership and usage. The consequences of this are: widespread congestion, personal danger from accidents, noise and air pollution. This article examines some of the trends which have lead to that situation, the financial costs involved and the opportunities for improvement which investing in light rail systems might provide

Summary of main arguments:

Current British policy on transportation is biased towards road investments and upkeep, while not enough money is being invested in public transportation. Lesley argues that British policy will not change because of current public attitudes towards public transportation, specifically buses. Lesley also argues that one way of decreasing private car use would be through higher car taxes, higher parking fees, or supplementary licenses for urban driving. Finally, Lesley argues that light rail is an investment that British cities should invest in. Light rail is affordable, cost-effective, and can decrease the use of private cars.

**EVIDENCE**

Summary of evidence:

* In Britain between the years 1987 and 1993 there was a 60% increase in the use of private cars and an even larger decline in public transport use
* The main expenditures “on public transport has been for revenue (subsidy), paying to maintain existing services, rather than improve them through new capital investment.” (Lesley 27)
* As more people use cars to transport themselves the number of road-related accidents has increased, “leading to increased consumption of hospital resources and reduced economic output” (Lesley 30)
  + Public transportation=less of these
* Congestion “causes vehicles to increase the output of polluting gases, which is already high” (Lesley 30)
* How to decrease private car use

1. Increase and enforce parking charges
2. Supplementary license and/or tolls for “operating a private car in an urban area” (Lesley 30)
3. Implement an urban fuel tax
   1. Besides providing incentive to use public transportation it could “provide an incentive for motorists to use smaller engine or more fuel-efficient vehicles, which would reduce emissions and urban pollution levels” (Lesley 31)
   2. Difficult to enforce because of large geographic areas
4. Reduction of road space
   1. Closing streets
   2. Pedestrianization of streets—make some streets a no-car zone

* “Policies to attract motorists from their cars onto public transport requires the relative generalized costs of public and private transport to be reversed. Policies which seek only to reduce public transport fares will not work. Waiting and walking times must be reduced because these are perceived to be twice as expensive as in vehicle time” (Lesley 31)
  + achieved through “services operating frequently and reliably” (Lesley 31)
  + “having stops closer together and more (feeder) routes operating, especially in residential areas” (Lesley 31)
* Light rail systems
  + “modern light railways can be built in the street, either sharing the highway with other traffic, or segregated by simple kerbs or soft landscaping. They can be built in the median strips of dual carriageways, on abandoned railway lines or other rights of way.” (Lesley 32)
  + Does not need tunneling, “which is very expensive and disruptive” (Lesley 32)
  + “Positive characteristics of railways, while being much cheaper to build and operate than metros” (Lesley 32)
  + Can carry up to 200 passengers at one time
  + “new light rail systems, with built-in traffic priority should easily achieve operating speeds of 25 km/hr” (Lesley 32)

**EVALUATION**

Evaluation of research:

This article has been well researched and is supported with lots of documentation. Within the article are several tables and graphs that help illustrate Lesley’s different points on investments in public transportation. Lesley does a good job at incorporating past articles of similar topics in order to support his points. The article is also useful because it evaluates British transportation in a logical, well thought out way that flows coherently.

 Evaluation of scope:

The topics covered in this article are all adequately addressed. I feel that Lesley could provide more information about the benefits of a light rail system, but the charts and graphs that he provides do this in a way not based in text. Overall, Lesley covers the topic of public transportation thoroughly.

Evaluation of author bias:

Lesley’s position is biased towards investing in light rail systems. Lesley strongly advocates for the reduction of private car use, and makes several suggestions on how this could be achieved. This reveals bias in other areas such as environmentalism and conservationism. Lesley is also biased in presenting his proposals for reducing private car use, as his goals seem a little lofty.

**REFLECTION:**

I think that this source will be very useful for my paper. I think that the points Lesley argues are really well thought out and support my idea that investments in public transportation are necessary and important. While Lesley focuses on bus and light rail means of transportation, I think that the statistics he provides will help support an argument around the benefits of rail transportation. Lesley’s proposals for how to cut down on private car use are things that I will try and look further in to. I feel that his four ideas are good and if properly implemented could actually work. However, I want to find research that backs this up, maybe through real city policies somewhere. Finally, Lesley’s point that a reduction in perceived cost is more important than actual cost. I think that faster trains, buses, or light rail systems build a stronger case for public transportation than cheap and crummy systems. Looking at how SEPTA is going to cut down on perceived cost is another thing that I will look further in to.